



Safeguarding Policy

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Pétanque England (PE) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, inclusive and positive environment for everyone involved in the sport of pétanque.

PE recognises its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of:

- Children, young people and adults at risk;
- Members, volunteers, officials, coaches and umpires;
- Spectators and all participants involved in PE activities.

PE also recognises that welfare concerns may arise in relation to any participant and will take appropriate action where an individual's safety, welfare or well-being may be at risk.

PE believes that everyone has the right to participate in sport free from abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, discrimination, exploitation or intimidation.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone involved in PE.

2. Purpose of this Policy

This Policy sets out:

- PE's commitment to safeguarding;
- The responsibilities of individuals and organisations operating under PE;
- Procedures for recognising, responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns;
- Standards of behaviour expected within the sport.

This Policy applies to:

- PE directors and officers;
- Employees and volunteers;
- Regional associations and affiliated clubs;
- Coaches, umpires and officials;
- Players and members;
- Parents, guardians and carers;
- Anyone participating in PE-sanctioned activities.

3. Guiding Principles

PE will:

- Place the welfare and safety of children, young people and adults at risk above all other considerations;
- Promote safeguarding as a fundamental part of the sport;
- Treat all concerns seriously and respond promptly;
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are handled fairly, sensitively and confidentially;
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are clear, accessible and proportionate;
- Work with statutory agencies where appropriate;
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Take appropriate action where safeguarding standards are breached.

4. Definitions

4.1 Child

A child is any person under the age of 18.

4.2 Adult at Risk

A person aged 18 or over who:

- has care and support needs; and

- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect.

4.3 At Risk

A person may be considered at risk where they are exposed to actual or potential harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, intimidation, discrimination or significant welfare concern, regardless of age.

4.4 Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting children, young people and adults at risk from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation and promoting their welfare.

5. Types of Abuse

Abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse;
- Emotional or psychological abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Neglect;
- Bullying or cyberbullying;
- Financial abuse;
- Discriminatory abuse;
- Grooming;
- Harassment or intimidation;
- Abuse of position of trust.

Safeguarding concerns may arise in person, online, through social media, by telephone or in written communications.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Pétanque England

PE will:

- Appoint a designated Safeguarding Officer;
- Maintain safeguarding procedures and reporting mechanisms;
- Promote safeguarding awareness and education;
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately;
- Liaise with statutory agencies where required;
- Maintain confidential safeguarding records;
- Ensure disciplinary procedures can address safeguarding matters where appropriate.

6.2 Regional Associations and Clubs

Regional associations and affiliated clubs are expected to:

- Adopt safeguarding procedures consistent with this Policy;
- Promote safe environments and positive behaviour;
- Appoint a Welfare or Safeguarding Lead where appropriate;
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly to PE where the matter is serious, involves potential risk beyond the club or region, may require disciplinary action, or cannot be appropriately managed at local level;
- Cooperate with safeguarding investigations and risk management measures.

6.3 Members, Officials and Volunteers

All individuals involved in PE activities must:

- Act in the best interests of children, young people and adults at risk;
- Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour;
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly;
- Cooperate with safeguarding procedures;
- Avoid conduct that may place themselves or others at risk.

Failure to comply with safeguarding responsibilities may result in disciplinary action.

7. Standards of Behaviour

All participants are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect;
- Promote an inclusive and welcoming environment;
- Avoid language or behaviour that may intimidate, humiliate or upset others;
- Respect personal boundaries;
- Challenge inappropriate conduct where safe to do so;
- Act as positive role models.

PE will not tolerate:

- Abuse or mistreatment of any individual;
- Bullying, harassment or victimisation;
- Discriminatory behaviour;
- Sexual misconduct;
- Retaliation against individuals who raise safeguarding concerns in good faith.

8. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Any safeguarding concern should be reported as soon as possible.

Individuals are not expected to investigate concerns before reporting them.

Concerns may include:

- Disclosure of abuse;
- Suspicion of harm or neglect;
- Inappropriate behaviour;
- Concerns about an individual's welfare;
- Breaches of safeguarding procedures;
- Concerns regarding online behaviour or communications.

Concerns should normally be reported to:

- The PE Safeguarding Officer; or
- A designated club or regional safeguarding lead.

Where there is immediate danger or a criminal matter:

- Emergency services should be contacted immediately; and/or
- The matter referred directly to the police or relevant statutory authority.

9. Responding to Concerns

Anyone receiving a safeguarding concern should:

- Listen carefully;
- Remain calm and supportive;
- Avoid making promises of confidentiality;
- Record factual information promptly;
- Avoid asking leading questions;
- Report the concern without delay.

PE recognises that safeguarding concerns may require immediate interim measures to protect individuals or the integrity of the sport.

10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding information will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information sharing is necessary to protect an individual, comply with legal obligations, support safeguarding enquiries or ensure a fair and proportionate process.

Information will only be shared where:

- Necessary to protect an individual;
- Required by law;
- Required for safeguarding or disciplinary purposes;
- Necessary for cooperation with statutory agencies.

PE may share relevant information with:

- Police;
- Local authorities;
- Safeguarding agencies;
- Sport governing bodies;
- Disciplinary or safeguarding panels.

11. Safer Recruitment and Suitability

Where appropriate, PE may:

- Require references;
- Undertake DBS or other suitability checks;
- Require safeguarding training;
- Assess suitability for positions involving responsibility for children, young people or adults at risk.

PE reserves the right to restrict or remove individuals from positions where safeguarding concerns arise.

12. Training and Awareness

PE will seek to promote safeguarding awareness through:

- Guidance documents;
- Safeguarding training;
- Codes of conduct;
- Education and communication with clubs, regions and officials.

Individuals working directly with children, young people or adults at risk may be required to complete safeguarding training.

13. Online Safety and Communications

PE recognises the importance of safe online communication.

Members, officials and volunteers must:

- Use appropriate language online;
- Avoid inappropriate private communications with children;
- Respect privacy and consent when sharing images or information;
- Use social media responsibly.

Any online behaviour that creates safeguarding concerns may be addressed under this Policy and PE disciplinary procedures.

14. Managing Safeguarding Allegations

Where safeguarding concerns indicate potential misconduct, PE may:

- Conduct safeguarding enquiries;
- Refer matters to disciplinary procedures;
- Impose interim measures;
- Suspend individuals where appropriate and proportionate;
- Refer matters to external agencies.

Safeguarding investigations and disciplinary processes may operate alongside one another where necessary.

Safeguarding procedures may be adapted where necessary to protect welfare, preserve confidentiality, comply with statutory obligations or ensure a fair and proportionate process.

15. Record Keeping

PE will maintain safeguarding records securely and confidentially.

Records may include:

- Incident reports;
- Safeguarding referrals;
- Risk assessments;
- Actions taken;
- Outcomes and decisions.

Records will be retained in accordance with legal, safeguarding and governance requirements and any retention schedule adopted by Pétanque England.

16. False or Malicious Allegations

PE recognises that safeguarding concerns are usually raised in good faith.

However, deliberately false, malicious or vexatious allegations may result in disciplinary action.

17. Whistle-blowing

PE encourages individuals to raise genuine safeguarding concerns without fear of retaliation.

Any attempt to victimise or disadvantage a person for raising safeguarding concerns in good faith may itself constitute misconduct.

18. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least every two years or sooner where necessary.

PE reserves the right to amend this Policy where necessary to protect participants or reflect changes in law, safeguarding requirements, governance requirements or best practice.

19. Related Documents

This Policy should be read alongside:

- PE Complaints Policy;
- PE Disciplinary Policy;
- PE Code of Conduct & Behaviour Standards;
- PE Equality and Diversity policies;
- Event regulations and competition rules;
- Relevant safeguarding guidance and legislation;
- Anti-Doping & Clean Sport Policy.

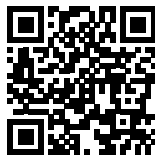
This Policy replaces all previous safeguarding policies adopted by Pétanque England and was approved by resolution of the Board.

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